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## Relationship between Jordan and United States of America in the context of Military Aid And Alliance

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### Abstract

Jordan has received the attention of international powers for decades, due to the unique characteristics it possess as a country. Especially because it is located in the heart of the vibrant Middle East, rich in immense natural resources, which makes it sit on the throne of global energy, and which further earned it civil, political and strategic importance. As it became a major corridor for land, air and sea transportation, and a focus for many global events, which increased the aspirations of the great international powers, led by the United States of America, to exist in this region, it has become the center of vital interests. After the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli conflict successive American Presidents pushed the White House to direct close attention to this region. This research will try to elucidate the military relations between US and Jordan. This paper will also focus on the factors related to the foreign policy strategy of both countries. This article will further throw light on the American military aid program to Jordan and its nature and the impact of impact of aid on US-Jordan relations will also be discussed. The paper will conclude with Observations and Findings.

Key Words: United States, Jordan, Military Aid, Foreign Policy.

### Introduction

Jordan has consistently followed a pro-Western foreign policy and traditionally has had close relations with the United States. These relations were damaged when Jordan started supporting Iraq during the first Gulf war in 1990-91. Although the Government of Jordan stated its opposition to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, popular support for Iraq was driven by Jordan's Palestinian community, which favored Saddam as a champion against Western supporters of Israel. The United States deeply values its long history of cooperation and friendship with Jordan, with which it established diplomatic relations in 1949. The United States appreciates the special leadership role that Jordan plays in advancing peace and moderation in the region. The United States and Jordan share the mutual goals of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East and an end to violent extremism that threatens the security of Jordan, the region, and the entire globe. The peace process and Jordan's opposition to terrorism parallel and indirectly assist wider U.S. interests. United States policy seeks to reinforce Jordan's commitment to peace, stability, and moderation. In light of ongoing regional unrest, United States has helped Jordan maintain its stability and prosperity through economic and military assistance and through close political cooperation (Saleh, 1997). The United States encourages Jordanian efforts to continue to implement key political and economic reforms that will secure a better future for the Jordanian people. From 1949 to 1967, Jordan administered the West Bank. Since the 1967 war between Israel and several Arab states, when Israel took control of the territory, the United States has considered the West Bank to be territory occupied by Israel. The United

States believes that the final status of the West Bank can be determined only through negotiations among the concerned parties based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 (Almashaqbeh & Sheikh, 2020).

## United States and Jordanian Military Relations

With the end of the Cold War, the United States adopted a new policy whereby it attempted to control the Middle East, after realizing that the obstacle that offered its control over the region represented by the Soviet power had disappeared. For this reason, US speeded up her attempts to control the region and occupied Iraq and Afghanistan, and strengthened her military presence in the Arabian Peninsula, Persian Gulf region, and Iraq. The United States also increased the momentum of its relationship with Jordan, which was characterized by close relations spanning several decades. The United States has sought to strengthen its relationship with Jordan as a result of factors including Jordan's commitment to peace, stability, moderation, and the United States has allocated annual military and economic assistance to Jordan. The United States has helped Jordan modernize its armed forces by providing it with a number of weapons and equipment. However, this cooperation remains limited in order not to prejudice the relative superiority of Israeli capabilities on the decisions in its regional neighborhood (Simon & Fromson, 2016).

The greater part of Jordan consists of a plateau. There are no natural topographical frontiers between Jordan and its neighbors Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and the plateau continues unbroken into three countries. The River Jordan rises just inside Syria and flows through Israel and Jordan until entering the Dead Sea 251km from its source. It is a tiny trickle of a river, especially in summer and, though a de facto frontier, is not a great natural obstacle. Jordan's plans for agricultural development entail increased irrigation, which depends on the availability of water, a scarce commodity in the region and therefore a potential bone of contention between Jordan and its neighbors. Various projects to improve the availability of water are being considered. Like most states, the majority of Jordan's day-to-day foreign policy centers on the business of protecting the country's immediate interests and promoting the short-term welfare of its citizens. However, the Hashemite leadership also pursued another track designed to promote the long-term rejuvenation of the Arab world. Jordan's vision is evident in the speeches, remarks, and statements of King Hussein and King Abdallah. Essential to the Jordanian vision is the importance of being open-minded to the outside world and remaining aware of the constraints imposed by the current international order (Almashaqbeh & Sheikh, 2020).

Following the first Gulf war, Jordan largely restored its relations with Western countries through its participation in the Middle East peace process and enforcement of UN sanctions against Iraq. Relations between Jordan and the Gulf countries improved substantially after King Hussein's death. Since the 2003 fall of the Iraqi regime, Jordan has played a pivotal role in supporting the restoration of stability and security to Iraq. The Government of Jordan has facilitated the training of over 50,000 Iraqi police cadets and corrections officers at a Jordanian facility near Amman. Jordan also plays host to a significant Iraqi population and has worked closely with donor agencies and the international community to address their humanitarian needs. In 2008, Jordan appointed and sent an ambassador to Iraq in an effort to strengthen bilateral ties. Jordan signed a non-belligerency agreement with Israel (the Washington Declaration) in Washington, DC, on July 25, 1994. Jordan and Israel signed a historic peace treaty on October 26, 1994, witnessed by President Bill Clinton (Osama, 2019). The United States has participated with Jordan and Israel in trilateral development discussions in which key issues have been water-sharing and security; cooperation on Jordan Rift Valley development; infrastructure projects; and trade, finance, and banking issues. Jordan also participates in multilateral peace talks. Jordan's historical relations with the Palestinian leadership have at times been difficult. It continues to support it on political, economic, social and cultural issues. Britain has a long-standing and close relationship with Jordan. Defense relations are an important part of this. Since 1993, annual joint military exercises have taken place and Royal Navy ships pay regular visits to Aqaba. In July 2002, the UK helped to support a debt rescheduling agreement as a result of the Paris Club discussions (Osama, 2019). In January 2008 the UK and other Paris Club members agreed a \$2 billion debt settlement with

Jordan (Al-Nawaisah, 1994). Jordan and the UK are also close partners in the fight against international terrorism. Jordan is a part of the UN and several of its specialized and related agencies, including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and World Health Organization (WHO). Jordan also is a member of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Non-aligned Movement, and Arab League. Since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000, Jordan worked to maintain lines of communication between the Israelis and the Palestinians to counsel moderation and to return the parties to negotiations of outstanding permanent status issues. These efforts bore fruit with the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations at the November 2007 Annapolis conference (Al-Barari, 2006). Jordan played an important role in facilitating the peace process through the training of several thousand Palestinian security force personnel. Jordan strongly advised the United States against its 2003 invasion of Iraq but has, nevertheless, sought to find ways to help stabilize Iraqi society after Saddam Hussein's ouster from power. Amman made these efforts (including a program to train Iraqi police) in partnership with the United States. Jordan's fortunes have often been linked to events in Iraq, its larger and more populous neighbor, and instability in that country was of special concern to Amman. The Jordanian-American military relations are affected by a number of factors and variables represented by the geopolitical factors resulting from Jordan's geographical, demographic, and economic situation. Including the reality of national wealth and foreign aid it receives, and ongoing social and economic transformations. These relations are also affected by the exudation and development of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Simon & Fromson, 2016).

### **Factors related to Jordanian foreign policy**

Jordan has received the attention of international powers for decades, due to the unique characteristics available in it. Especially because it is located in the heart of the vibrant Middle East, rich in immense natural resources, which made it sit on the throne of global energy, and which earned it civil, political and strategic importance. As it became a major corridor for land, air and sea transportation, and a focus on many global events, which increased the aspirations of the great international powers, led by the United States of America, to exist in this region, has become the center of its vital interests. Especially after the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli conflict, whereby successive American presidents pushed the White House to direct close attention to this region, including former President (Harry Truman) who stated on April 6, 1946, that it Jordan is an economic and strategic area in the Middle East (Osama, 2019).

The American interest in Jordan has increased in connection with the vital importance of the Middle East, which has emerged greatly after the Second World War. It was developed by the United States in the form of principles relating to the region. One of the most prominent was that summarized by the American President Jimmy Carter on February 23, 1980, in his annual speech, which included what is known as the Carter principle in which he stated that any attempt by any external force to control the Arab Gulf region is an attack Against the vital interests of the United States of America, and that any such attack would be responded to by any necessary means, including military force (Al-Barari, 2006). Then came the principle of Reagan in 1981, which is based on gathering the main countries in the Middle East to protect American interests by strengthening the American military presence by establishing military bases and benefiting from the facilities provided by the rulers of the countries of the region ( Al-Amru, 2004).

All this coincided with the United States of America moving towards democratic systems that seeks to achieve justice, protect human rights and to protect public freedoms. A trend has emerged within the United States calling for linking the development of American relations with countries seeking democratization processes, which prompted the American administrations in which the presidents (Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Bark Obama), opted to allocate a portion of the financial aid to support democracy within the American national budget, and to extend the aid in achieving progress of democratization. In addition to supporting the ruling regimes in

countries that come close to the American approach in fighting terrorism and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (Al-Nawaisah, 1994).

Nevertheless, Jordan was able to build a strategy that was implemented through foreign policy, whose interests focused on ensuring the security, safety and stability of the country, and also preserving the territorial integrity, people of the country, defending the sovereignty of the state, ensuring political stability, and providing internal security. The political decision-makers sought to achieve a set of strategies, so that Jordan can maintain a moderate level of self-defense capabilities, and achieve balanced economic and social developments. These trends were the focus of attention and observation on the part of the United States of America, which began to see Jordan through these goals as a strategic ally seeking to achieve peace in the Middle East. The United States also believes that Jordan's obtaining foreign aid will play an important role in securing Jordan's defense capabilities and assisting it in developing its economy and achieving balanced economic developments (Almashaqbeh & Sheikh, 2020).

### **American military aid program to Jordan and its nature**

The American military aid program provided to a number of countries in the world took many forms, the most prominent of which were: Arms sales to developing countries and countries in the Middle East that have developed relations with the United States. Not to mention the so-called aid program for those or some of these countries and the US Congress retained its legal right to review the proposed sales, as it can approve it, amend it, or reject it. Among other forms, there is the International Military Education and Training Program, which provides grants to recipient countries in order to cover the costs of training the American Foundation for the forces of those countries. This program represents the primary aspect of US foreign aid programs (Simon & Fromson, 2016).

The United States of America considers its relations with Jordan through Jordan's characteristics that affect the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict, by being an important party to this conflict, as well as the geostrategic and demographic factors related to the Palestinian side of the conflict. The United States was in favor of annexing Jordan to the Arab part of the Palestinian territories that remained outside the scope of Israeli control and considering it as an inherent part of Jordanian territory and not on the formula of unity that took place between the two banks (Musa, 1996, 539). American pressure contributed to a large extent in Jordan's direction towards the currency of the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was an important choice in Jordan's foreign policy. The United States of America sought, through its pressures, to push Jordan towards seeking the American assistance it desperately needs, and to obtain economic and military gains that play a role in achieving political stability in Jordan, allowing for a regional role in the region with the rest of the parties to the conflict (Syria and Lebanon and Palestine). The United States' view of the advantages of Jordan's strategic location represents a buffer zone between Iraq and the Zionist entity, particularly after Iraq bombed Israel with missiles in the second Gulf War in 1991. Jordan has become particularly important to a peaceful designation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the failure to solve the Palestinian refugee problem in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, which has given Jordan a real role in the issues of the Arab world due to its rational leadership proposals (Al-Tal, 2003).

Jordan has considered its distinguished relations with the United States of America as a constant of its foreign policy since it established its foundations. King Abdullah II was focusing on all his official visits to the United States of America and during his meetings with American politicians on deportation and the pursuit of goals related to the Palestinian issue and economic, military and security relations and others. Not to mention an American attempt to compensate Jordan for the damage it suffered from the situation in Iraq before and after the American war, and the damage inflicted on Jordan during the siege period during and after the war (Luck, 2019).

In return for all this, the United States of America provided its assistance to Jordan in an effort to achieve a compatibility between the policies pursued by the Jordanian and the American parties regarding maintaining security and stability in the Middle East region, and in particular the continuation of the peace process with Israel.

Therefore, the nature of American aid to Jordan is related to the future of the United States, its position and its globally active role in the extent of its ability to deal with the developments of the global system that it constructed in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War, which is based on the principle of unipolarity. However, the developments of events in the world that came as a result of the policy of American hegemony may result in the rise of a new power and groups and organizations that possess the power, which makes their influence more than some nation-states. Despite being the largest military power in the world, today it is severely stripped by its expansionist wars, and its economy is weakening more and more due to the intense competition it is exposed to by the economies of other emerging powers, this will lead to a smooth and peaceful transition to a new pluralistic system without disasters. This makes the American engagement with Jordan in close relationship one of the central and important options for the American strategy in the Middle East region, and this gave Jordan an opportunity to use its position and role in the regional environment in order to obtain foreign aid compatible with the vital interests and goals of the United States in the region, which was the role of some former allies as a result of what was known as the Arab Spring. As American aid to Jordan witnessed fluctuations from year to year due to international changes, issues, and some Jordanian positions that fell short of the American side, it increased in response to threats faced by Jordan and decreased during periods of difference in political positions or global restrictions on aid financing (Simon & Fromson, 2016).

### **The impact of aid on Jordanian-American relations**

Most studies related to the aid issue have found that donor countries have more aid in their ability to influence recipient countries, research that has a maximum impact when the recipient countries have the following characteristics. i.e. the recipient state does not have another alternative aid. That the recipient country is unable to pay the money for the weapons it needs. The recipient state should be unique in the international community. The recipient state should not envision a real threat to security. It should not possess rare raw materials and to have a strong ideological orientation so that its transformation into another ideology becomes impossible (Al-Samman, 1990).

All these characteristics apply to Jordan in its relationship with the United States with regard to aid. United States of America has sought to reach specific goals when providing foreign aid to developing countries. And it clearly emerged in the 1960s, which witnessed an increase in the politicization of aid, and the link between that aid and the foreign policy of the recipient countries increased. The main goal behind the aid was to maintain the security of the western camp led by the United States vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, the leader of the eastern camp, and this was explicitly stated in the letter of the American President John Kennedy to the American Congress in 1963 that said: "The aid program to Turkey and Greece was a critical element to enable it to stand up to Soviet pressure" (Kaplan, 1968), while US President Richard Nixon stated in the US Congress that, "Those who constantly take us from a hostile position cannot rely on our aid" (Khushi, 1978).

In 1979 the International Security Aid Act authorized the United States government to spend 4.8 billion dollars to support the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement, from which Egypt obtained 1.8 billion dollars (Al-Shobaki, 2006). Then foreign aid became one of the tools used by the United States of America to achieve the goals of its foreign policy. This policy has grown in a clear and guileless manner in the few years following the end of the Second World War in 1945. The Mutual Security Law has been resolved to be a major law for United States economic and military aid, and aid has become subject to annual follow-up to the United States Congress, and the United States Agency for International Development has been established for this purpose (Luck, 2019). Strengthening the national security of the United States, through the fact that the United States is the only dominant superpower in the world, its national security expands to cover the entire world, and accordingly, the goals of American military aid in the countries of the Middle East region are determined by a set of goals, for example, to support stability in the Middle East region and to help friendly countries in the region to provide their

requirements. Security support efforts to resolve conflicts by peaceful means, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict and to ensure the world's access to vital oil resources in the Arab Gulf region (Bessette, 2016).

Jordan obtained various military aid in accordance with the US Foreign Aid Law, which adopted Jordan in 1996 as a major ally of the United States outside NATO. Jordan has received military assistance from the United States of America in order to modernize the Jordanian armed forces (Bessette, 2016). For example, the United States provided the Jordanian Air Force with medium-range air-to-air missiles and Black Hawk aircraft to improve Jordan's ability to monitor borders and combat terrorism. The United States also agreed to provide Jordan with radiation monitors on the Jordanian border to monitor any attempt to smuggle nuclear material. The Military Cooperation Authority between Jordan and the United States, which started its work in 1974, received more than 300 Jordanian soldiers to receive their education in the United States. Not to mention conducting joint military exercises between the United States and Jordanian forces on an annual basis (Al-Taweel, 1996).

In spite of this, the relations of the two countries did not go at a single pace, but witnessed some non-positive stances on the American side, the most prominent of which was, for example, The United States stopping American aid to Jordan as a result of Jordan's neutral stance in the second Gulf War in 1991 and its preservation of relations with Iraq because it believes that Iraq is the strategic depth of Jordan on one side and for national and humanitarian reasons on the other side (Bessette, 2016). The Jordanian neutral position also harmed Jordanian relations with the Arab Gulf states, as it led to a deterioration of the relationship with these countries for several years, especially during Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and beyond. Despite this, Jordan continued to call for the lifting of the international embargo imposed on Iraq, but Jordanian-Gulf relations began to return to normalcy, especially after Jordan's participation in the Middle East peace process, and assistance in implementing international sanctions imposed on the regime in Iraq. The United States also did not agree to establish a Jordanian nuclear program and preventing it from fertilizing for several years (Binnie, 2019).

In addition, military and technical cooperation between Russia and Jordan for the production of the missile launcher called *RBG3* contributed to an agreement signed in 2010 that also includes the supply of military transport planes to Jordan put a strain in US-Jordanian relations (Binnie, 2019). The United States considered the launcher to be one of the most important threats to the national security of the United States of America, along with other ballistic missiles. Also, the American reservation towards some Jordanian arming demands related to advance combat tactical weapons led to a stalemate in Jordanian-American relations. Jordan has endeavored to develop its armed forces in line with what is happening in the countries of the world, and therefore the American rejection of the Jordanian endeavor contradicts its desire (Imad, 1997).

Accordingly, it can be concluded from the above that the American military aid program has contributed to achieving Jordan's engagement with the United States of America with strong relations built on foundations and rules in which mutual trust between the two countries was demonstrated by the historical experience of the Jordanian leadership in dealing with successive American administrations that are well aware of the importance of Jordan's role in the success of this strategy Departments, and in its pivotal role in the Middle East. Therefore, the United States of America contributes to military support to modernize the Jordanian armed forces, while conducting joint military exercises between the two countries, but this did not prevent the major security risks in the regional environment as a result of the continuation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the failure to establish an independent Palestinian state, which posed a direct threat to Jordan. By remaining threats related to the implementation of the displacement project, especially in light of the theories of the Israeli extreme right related to the idea of an alternative homeland (Imad, 1997).

## Conclusion and Observations

Perhaps the Jordanian-American relations are distinguished from other relations that Arab countries offer with the United States of America as the relationship that can bring benefit to the central cause of the Arabs (the Palestinian issue). It is not true that the Jordanian-American relationship is linked to financial aid only, despite what economic and military assistance Jordan received from the United States. Political relations and mutual understandings on the main issues in the region remain more important and influence in ensuring stability and avoiding the confrontations imposed by the general political climate in the Middle East, and in preventing the change of the balance of power in favor of the forces of extremism and terrorism. What distinguishes Jordanian-American relations for decades is that they were not divided in their political division, because all the political issues that are placed on the table Jordanian-American meetings are issues of Arab dimensions and focus in particular on the Palestinian dimension (Sheikh & Muhammad, 2018).

The United States provides Jordan with annual financial assistance that covers a percentage of the state's budget deficit in addition to other aid that contributes to the implementation of development projects that include scientific, educational, and health aspects and in other vital areas. The United States gives Jordan a distinct commercial priority under the expected free trade agreement between the two countries. The reality that must be changed is that Jordan depends on American aid a lot, and this fact is not fair to ignore, whether it is intended to thank and gratify the United States of America for its assistance or to do serious work to search for other sources of support required for the Jordanian economy, and to get rid of the consequences of relying on Foreign aid, and amongst that, Jordanian-American relations will remain important and required (Sheikh & Yusofi, 2019).

According to the foregoing, this research has touched on many aspects related to Jordanian-American relations with interest and seriousness, after it touched on the following dimensions. The Jordanian-American military relations were affected by a number of factors that contributed to determining the degree and level of relations between the two countries, through the type and nature of Jordanian foreign policy towards issues of concern to US strategic interests in the Middle East region. As the geopolitical factors resulting from Jordan's geographical, demographic and economic situation, including the reality of national wealth and foreign aid received, and the current social and economic transformations and its implications for the social and political composition of Jordanian society play a role in this regard. While the American strategy towards the Middle East region in general, and towards Jordan in particular, played a role in determining the nature of relations between the two parties, and this strategy was represented by a set of necessary priorities for the American engagement in the region, which were not satisfied with the change that their interests achieved. Not only does it want to fight the threats it faces, but its desire also includes regional variables that bring with such threats, so it has to follow the additional pillars of its policy in the countries of the Middle East. This research tried to answer the question related to the dimensions of the American interest in Jordan, Al-Baath lived up to the fact that Jordanian-American relations were based on strategic, security and political dimensions that increased the American interest in the Jordanian and expressed in the economic and military support in order to improve Jordan's capabilities and contribute to alleviating the burdens imposed on it. The support, which distinguished Jordan and made it a strategic ally of the United States from outside the framework of NATO, in appreciation of Jordan's efforts to bring peace, and for its great role as a factor of security, stability and balance in the Middle East region. Its distinguished location contributed to granting it strategic importance that exceeds its geographical size, which made it separate between conflicting countries that have vital interests with the United States, Israel, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, which created Jordan with great challenges that it sought to meet by following internal and external political trends that were the focus of US interest. The research focused on the impact of American aid on that the American military aid program has contributed to achieving Jordan's association with the United States of America with a solid relationship built on the basis and rules in which mutual trust between the two countries was demonstrated by the historical experience of the Jordanian leadership in dealing with successive American administrations. Well aware of the important role of Jordan in the success of the strategy of these administrations, and in its pivotal role in the Middle East region. Therefore, the United States contributes to military support to modernize the Jordanian army, while conducting joint military exercises between the two countries, but this did

not prevent the major security threats in the regional environment as a result of the continuation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the failure of an independent Palestinian state, which poses a direct threat to Jordan by remaining threats related to the implementation of the displacement project, especially in light of the theories of the Israeli far-right regarding the idea of an alternative homeland (Sheikh, et al, 2020).

There are many political, economic and military factors that affected Jordanian-American relations, which came through Jordan's influence on the geopolitical environment and its international relationship as well as the factors and influences resulting from its demographic and economic situation, including the reality of national wealth, foreign aid, and the socio-economic transformations taking place throughout the reform process, and its implications for the composition of Jordanian society and its social and political structure. The geographical location, demographic factors, and economic conditions in Jordan have clearly contributed to increasing the dimensions of Jordanian interest in the United States of America, which in turn has raised the level of relations between the two friendly countries at various levels to distinct ranks. The American aid provided to Jordan in 2011 directed to the budget was conditional on Jordan achieving legislative reforms. Others are related to the business sector and investment promotion, and thus they are achieving transparency and disclosure. And that Jordan obtaining the usual American aid for 2012 was subject to the fulfillment of a set of conditions, which were discussed with the US Agency for International Development. Finally, the American military assistance program contributed to strengthening the relationship between the two countries at all levels within solid rules built on the foundations of mutual trust between the two countries while evoking the historical experience of the Jordanian leadership in dealing with successive American administrations that realized the importance of Jordan's role in the success of this strategy.

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